

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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R 041200Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4664

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 3852

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: OPERATION "SHOESTRING": IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF MUSIC
APPRECIATION AND PERFORMANCE IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

1. IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC THE QUALITY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC PERFORMANCE IS NOT HIGH. FOR THIS REASON AMONG A NUMBER OF OTHERS, THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL, AS THE DEPT IS AWARE, IN BRINGING A U.S. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AS ONE MEANS OF UPGRADING CLASSICAL MUSIC APPRICAIAATION HERE. SUCH AN ISOLATED EVENT, HOWEVER BENEFICIAL, CAN NOT BY ITSELF DO THE JOB AND WE HAVE BEEN CASTING ABOUT FOR AN ADDITIONAL, MORE CONTINUOUS WAY OF HEIGHTENING DOMINICAN SENSIBILITIES TO CLASSICAL MUSIC.

2. FACED WITH THIS CHALLENGE, WE DECIDED TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF MUSIC FELLOWSHIPS WHICH WOULD BRING A FEW RECENT GRADUATES OF U.S. MUSIC SCHOOLS TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TO PLAY IN THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (WHICH BADLY NEEDS MUSICAL HELP) AND CONCOMITTANTLY TO TEACH AT THE NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC IN ORDER TO DEVELOP DOMINICAN TALENT. ACCORDINGLY, A PROJECT WAS DRAWN UP AND A LETTER OVER THE AMBASSADOR'S SIGNATURE WAS SENT TO A NUMBER OF U.S. COMPANIES AND FOUNDATIONS SEEKING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SUCH FELLOWSHIPS, WHICH WE CALCULATED TO REQUIRE U.S.\$10,000 EACH, ANNUALLY.

3. ALTHOUGH THE RESPONSE HAS NOT BEEN OVERWHELMING, WE HAVE NEVERTHELESS RAISED US\$23,000 IN THIS MANNER FOR THIS PURPOSE. WE HAVE ALSO INTERESTED LATIN AMERICAN TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS (LATF) OF TUFTS TO ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM FOR US AND THE FUNDS WE HAVE RAISED WILL THEREFORE BE ASSIGNED TO LATF. THE FUNDS WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOR TWO FELLOWSHIPS.

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4. BOTH THE NATIONAL SYMPHONY AND THE CONSERVATORY ARE DELIGHTED
BY THE PROSPECT OF HAVING TWO YOUNG AMERICAN MUSICIANS IN THEIR
RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS FOR AT LEAST A YEAR. IF THIS MODEST
START BRINGS ENCOURAGING RESULTS, WE SHALL GIVE THOUGHT TO A MORE
AMBITIOUS (MORE FELLOWSHIPS ON A MULTI-YEAR BASIS) PROGRAM FOR
THE FUTURE.
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